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Cal EMA Secretary Matthew Bettenhausen Announces Special Funds To Battle Human Trafficking In Orange County

New Westminster Police Department program trains law enforcement to recognize child victims

ORANGE COUNTY - California Emergency Management Agency Secretary Matthew Bettenhausen today announced a total of \$1.6 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) and Children's Justice Act (CJA) grant funding to support Orange County's efforts to combat human trafficking. This funding will be awarded to both the Westminster Police Department and the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force to support law enforcement officers in their work to stop traffickers and aid victims of this harmful and dehumanizing crime.

"These funds will further bolster efforts to more quickly and better recognize the signs of human trafficking in their local communities and take swift action to rescue the victims," said Senior Advisor to the Governor and California Recovery Task Force Director Herb K. Schultz. "Both the Westminster Police Department and the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force will now be able to improve their effectiveness and efficiency moving towards more effective solutions to this crime."

The Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force will directly receive \$375,000 in Recovery Act funding as part of a larger award of \$3.75 million in Recovery Act, Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) stimulus funds. The Westminster Police Department received \$1.2 million as State of California CJA funding and will use these funds to train law enforcement in specifically recognizing and identifying children who are being victimized through human trafficking.

"Human trafficking is a travesty beyond words," stated Secretary Bettenhausen. "It is imperative that we send a clear message to those involved in committing this heinous crime that their activity will not be tolerated. Educating the law enforcement community to recognize the specific nuances of this type of crime is an effective line of offense."

Currently, California has six state-federal human trafficking task forces, made up of government and Non-Government Organizations (NGO's) including Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Orange County and Oakland. There are three new task forces currently being developed to address areas of the state not currently being served, including the Central Valley, Northern California and the Coast. The Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force is made up of many community service agencies, with core collaborative partners being the Westminster Police Department, Community Service Programs, Inc, and the Public Law Center.

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Governor Schwarzenegger has been a strong advocate for reducing human trafficking and raising awareness of ways we can stop it. He has signed numerous bills that provide protection and care for those illegally trafficked into California and increase the penalties of those convicted of this heinous crime:

- [Signed AB 17 in 2009](#), which increased fines for those convicted of abducting a person under 18 years of age for the purpose of prostitution.
- [Signed AB 1278 in 2008](#), which prohibits contracts that siphon future wages in exchange for the costs of transporting an individual to the U.S.
- [Signed SB 1569 in 2006](#) to extend crucial support services like Medi-Cal and Healthy Families to victims of human trafficking.
- [Signed AB 22 and AB 180 in 2005](#), which made human trafficking in California a felony punishable by up to eight years in state prison and required the California Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) to develop a course on human trafficking.

Last month, Governor Schwarzenegger issued a proclamation declaring January 11, 2010 as “Human Trafficking Awareness Day” in honor of national human trafficking awareness day.

For more information about human trafficking and all of Cal EMA’s programs, please visit www.calema.ca.gov

For more information about Recovery Act JAG awards and other stimulus programs, please visit www.recovery.ca.gov

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